

Homewood  
Residence Charles Carroll Jr.  
Baltimore, Maryland

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
John H. Scarff - District Officer,  
1012 Keyser Building, Baltimore, Md.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS WRITTEN BY CHARLES CARROLL OF  
CARROLLTON TO HIS SON, CHARLES CARROLL, JR., REGARD-  
ING THE BUILDING OF HOMEWOOD.

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January 30, 1801

Respecting the plan of your house to be built on Homewood, we will discourse at large when you and Harriet pay me a visit, which I suppose will be in a little time after Mrs. Caton's return. That house with the out-houses will I am confident greatly exceed \$10,000 and that is the utmost sum which must be laid out in buildings on Homewood. However as you must have a dwelling house on your farm and proper out-houses, your hirelings may begin to dig the clay as soon as you please. A retreat to Homewood during the fall and summer months will be rendered necessary to preserve the health of your family and to occupy and amuse yourself.

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February 9, 1801

I received yesterday your letter of the 7th inst. by Austin containing Edward's estimate of expenses for building your country house and the proposals of brick makers.

I do not think the plan of the house herewith returned can be reduced so as to make it comfortable, and therefore I agree to it. I have not examined Edwards' estimate; this I leave to Mr. Caton, and also to agree to such proposals for making and burning bricks as on the whole, and in consideration of all circumstances, he may judge to be most advantageous.

The sum I agreed to give toward the improvements on Homewood was \$1500.00, whereof \$580.17 has already been expended by you, as will appear by sundry items which I have selected from the vouchers of disbursements, and which I will show you when I have the pleasure of seeing you here. If from \$1500.00 you subtract \$580.17 the remainder will be \$919.83, which sum you may expend on improvements and draw from Mr. Caton occasionally as the money may be wanted; the bills for expenditures for the said improvements you ought to pay yourself, and not trouble Mr. Caton or myself with them, but take care that the above sum of \$919.83 be strictly applied to the improvements here understood, such as fencing, manuring and hirelings wages, in short to such objects only as will cultivate the soil. The expenditures for building yourhouse I am to pay.

If you should not clearly comprehend my meaning, Mr. Caton with whom I have had some conversation on this subject will fully explain it to you.

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Annapolis  
12 February, 1801

While you live in Baltimore it will be necessary for the health of your family and for the exercise of your mind and body to have a house on Homewood to retreat to in the summer and autumn. I would recommend the repair of the present buildings on that farm and some additional rooms to make it cool, comfortable and convenient residence during those seasons; costly buildings on the place will impede the sale of it, but the more highly the lands are cultivated and improved the better they will sell hereafter, and in that case you will probably cover not only the first cost of the purchase and disbursements for improvements with interest on the sums expended, but reap some profit, if not in money, as least by the acquired knowledge of agriculture from practical experience, and of keeping accounts, and the habit of application to useful pursuits.

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June 7, 1801

You must raise separate accounts with your carpenter, brick-maker, stonemason, and brick-layer, and with all others with whom you may have dealings.

. . . . .

You should keep distinct and separate accounts of the balance of the \$1500.00 allotted for the improvement of the farm; this I advised you to do when I was last in Baltimore, and I expect your compliance in that direction.

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July 17, 1801

It really is not in my power to make the advance you mention toward the improvement of Homewood farm. Your disbursements for carriages, horses and furniture have been so large, and ~~in~~ so many other objects of expense are accumulating upon me, that however desirous I cannot comply with your wishes.

I wish you to inform me what amounts for furniture remain yet unpaid; get in all these accounts and deliver them to Mr. Greetham. It seems there is no end of these expenses; in every account I get from Mr. Caton there is a charge of \$200. or \$300. for furniture. I desire you will henceforth cease and put a stop to this course of expenditure, a great part of which is unnecessary; a time will come when you will sincerely regret having lavished so much money on such objects.

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4-BALT

I received yesterday a letter from Mr. Murdoch with an account containing a charge of £92 7 shillings sterling your order to Mr. Foley for books and cutlery, which with endurance and other charges amounts to £100 9 shillings 10d sterling. This charge is quite unexpected. I desire you will never in future give order to Mr. Murdoch or any other person without obtaining my previous consent. £47 7 shillings sterling of the above amount is for books - if you would really read and acquire useful knowledge by study and reading this would be money well laid out if the books are well chosen. But you have let slip the best time for reading and improvement ..... these books which you have imported without my knowledge or at least approbation were intended more to decorate your bookcase than for you.

What need have you for cutlery? This amount is £45 sterling. You really spend money money like water and do not know its value.

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Annapolis  
November 17, 1801

How do the workmen come on with your house at Homewood? I suppose the brick-layers are discharged for the present and only the carpenters are at work upon the inside of the house.

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13 December, 1801

I suppose Mr. Edwards is going on with the carpenter's work of your house. This may be done within doors.

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8 May, 1802

I am charged in my accounts current with Mr. Caton for March and April with £232 1 shilling 10d for improvement on your farm. To this sum are to be added on the same account several large disbursements charged in preceding accounts current to a very large amount. I cannot support these heavy and frequent charges. It is with difficulty I can command money to pay your annuity and building account, and comply with my other engagements. I therefore shall not advance any more money for improvements on your farm, and have written to Mr. Caton strictly enjoining him not to pay any more bills presented to him for such improvements.

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July 24, 1802

I am glad you are comfortably settled at Homewood. After next winter I would recommend a constant residence at Homewood, to which you might remove your family by the middle of April; by that time I hope your house will be entirely finished and painted, and the disagreeable smell of the paint gone off.

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August 24, 1802

I desire you to direct Edwards to pay to your workmen such moneys only as are absolutely necessary to support their families; I have been obliged to get Mr. Greetham to discount a note of \$2,000.00 to meet such payments. I cannot and will not discount another, and I do not expect to collect moneys of any account before October.

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12 September 1802.

Mr. Greetham informs me that the bridge will cost \$100.00. What an improvident waste of money - you are imposed on by your undertaker, who leads you into extravagant expenditures on your buildings to swell his commissions and his accounts. The time will come when you will severely feel and deeply regret so much money thrown away on such baubles, which a want of thought or a silly pride has occasioned you to spend without consulting me.

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September 18, 1802.

I did tell Mr. Greetham you must pay out of your yearly stipend the cost of digging your new well, but as your stipend is encumbered with the debts you mentioned, I will pay the cost of the well.

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July 31, 1803.

I understood from you that you had discharged all your carpenters and other workmen about your building, yet on questioning Mr. Greetham I learned with surprise that you are projecting alterations to your dairy. I have informed Mr. Greetham that I will not pay another shilling for any building or alteration of building on your account; these alterations I advise you not to begin; but if you have them made, I most solemnly do assure you I will not pay for them - Mr. Greetham tells me he thinks the total amount of disbursements on account of building on Homewood will not fall short of \$40,000.00, a most improvident waste of money, and which you will have reason as long as you live to look back upon with painful regret. - Mr. Caton tells me you are industrious and that you have improved and even embellished your lands. I am sorry that such vast sums have been squandered on buildings, that far from improving the value of Homewood will impede its sale to advantage; the very interest of that \$40,000.00 would in a few years make a handsome provision for several of your children, and 1/20th of that sum would have ameliorated your grounds and added a quadruple increase to the original purchase, by the embellishment it would have enabled you to put on the farm and the superior degree of cultivation it would have given to it.

But you have wasted so much money in building that you have quite incapacitated me from affording you any further assistance than the annuity of \$5,000.00 within the limits of which you must restrict yourself.

God bless you.

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These extracts of the Carroll letters submitted by John H. Scarff, District Officer of Maryland, through the courtesy of Mr. J. G. D. Paul.

ADDENDUM TO:  
HOMEWOOD  
(Charles Carroll Jr. Mansion)  
North Charles & Thirty-Fourth Streets  
Baltimore  
Independent City  
Maryland

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PHOTOGRAPHS

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

FIELD RECORDS

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U.S. Department of the Interior  
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